# 'Double Sorrow': the Complexity of Complaint in Chaucer's *Anelida and Arcite* and Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid*

Robert Henryson defines his *Testament of Cresseid* as a companion piece to Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. The narrator tells us how, unable to sleep one cold spring night, he takes a copy of Chaucer's poem from the shelf, and reads the tale of 'fair Creisseid and worthie Troylus' (42), and of the sorrow which the Trojan prince endures when his lover fails to return to Troy.[1] The author is heralded as 'worthie Chaucer glorious' (41), and yet Henryson's narrator nevertheless casts doubt upon *Troilus and Criseyde's* veracity, uttering the immortal line: 'Quha wait gif all that Chauceir wrait was trew?'(64). It is a forceful demand that places the work of the earlier poet under scrutiny right from the outset. This is not the 'reverend Chaucer' of Lydgate's verse, but rather an author whose work is being challenged, either as somehow erroneous, or else as in some way deceitful. It is, no doubt, a playful challenge, but the key question of truth is still being laid before us in order that we should consider it as a fundamental theme in the work that will follow. Nor does the question limit itself to literary truth. What is being scrutinised is the more complicated question of the possible knowledge of truth - 'Quha wait?'- placed within the context of the dubious conveyance of truth in literary form. It is a Russian doll effect that Henryson presents at key moments in the narrative, as he embeds uncertainty within uncertainty, and sometimes lies within lies. The question of truth pervades the entire narrative of the *Testament*, and lingers in the sources to which Henryson draws attention, for he employs not just one of Chaucer's explorations of falsity in love, but

two. Beyond *Troilus and Criseyde* lies the love story of *Anelida and Arcite*. It is to this text that Henryson reaches at the climax of the *Testament* in order to explore the complexity of knowledge and the embedded layers of what constitutes 'truth', whether for the lover, the author, or the reader.

Before that point, however, there is the matter of Henryson's teasing acrostic, 'O FICTIO'(57-63), placed just at the point where the narrator puts down his volume of Chaucer and selects another book, the *Testament* itself, in its place. The acrostic has engaged critics intent on establishing the existence or non-existence of the 'vther quair' (61) that Henryson's narrator claims as his source:

> Of his distress me neidis nocht reheirs,
> For worthie Chauceir in the samin buik,
> In gudelie termis and in ioly veirs,
> Compylit hes his cairis, quha will luik.
> To brek my sleip ane vther quair I tuik,
> In quhilk I fand the fatall destenie
> Of fair Cresseid, that endit wretchitlie. (57-63)

However, the verse at this point is not solely concerned with the 'other book'. More than half of the stanza is given over to Chaucer's text, and to the sorrows of Troilus. Critical emphasis is traditionally placed on the 'other book', which may be 'fenȝeit' (66), but this only partially accounts for the acrostic.[2] The truth of Chaucer's verse is being explicitly called into question, indeed its validity is being measured against that of another work that in all likelihood does not exist at all. What becomes clear is that nothing is certain, least of all the words crafted by poets and makars. After all, this is a work in which we will encounter Mercury, that patron deity of liars, with a book in his hand, dressed 'Lyke to ane poeit of the auld fassoun' (245). All of this points to an interest in fiction, truth, and lies that pervades the poem.

Furthermore, the very existence of the acrostic is proof of the poet's interest in what is occluded. By its nature, the acrostic can only be perceived visually rather than

aurally, and as such it is the privileged knowledge of a sole reader rather than multiple listeners. That is, of course, assuming a vigilant reader, for the acrostic reads against the main poem: the eye must be led away from the narrative to the alternative, perpendicular, text. Unless signalled in some way, by a change of colour or by indentation, the majority of readers will pass over it, oblivious to the possibilities it offers.[3] None of the surviving sixteenth-century copies of the *Testament* signal the acrostic. The setter of the important Charteris witness, for example, is likely to have been completely unaware of its existence, the last two lines of the acrostic being interrupted and carried to the following page.[4] The mind at this point is forced towards division, suspending its engagement with the poem at one level in order to interpret the counter-text. Indeed, the doubleness is compounded by medieval attitudes towards lexical anticipation itself. The mind's action in anticipating words and interpreting them was, in medieval terms, both an imaginative and memorial process. Not just words, but syllables of words cease to exist as soon as they have been uttered; the forms of letters that are not currently before us similarly are non-existent to the mind, except insofar as it has already received both sounds and images, imprinting them upon the imagination, and retrieving them. As Augustine explains: 'unless the spirit immediately formed in itself the image of a voice heard by the ears, and stored it in the memory, you would not know whether the second syllable was the second, since the first would now no longer exist, having vanished after striking the ear'.[5] Remembered words, spoken or written, are already copies of utterances, suspended and arranged as the mind attempts to make sense of what it sees and hears. An acrostic is an exaggerated double form of this process, compelling the reader to suspend the main text while dealing with the puzzling counter-text, both, therefore, occupying space in the divided mind of the reader.

This cognitive doubleness is one of the key concerns of the narrative. Critical attention has been, rightly to some extent, focussed upon the possibly non-existent other book, and the authorial fiction surrounding it. All texts can be, and are, challenged, including, explicitly, this one. The questioning of Chaucer's veracity is closely followed by doubts about the 'other book', which is, of course, not a source text, but the very work he proceeds to narrate, for the *Testament* itself is the potentially 'feigned' text:

> Nor I wait nocht gif this narratioun
> Be authoreist, or fenyeit of the new
> Be sum poeit, throw his inventioun (65-7)

Indeed, this is the first recorded instance of 'invention' being used in a literary context to refer to the 'making-up' of a story.[6] Moreover, these three striking lines of profound doubt about the veracity of the *Testament*, refer to Henryson's own text, delivered by a narrative voice whom he himself has created. The implications of the '*fictio*' acrostic, therefore, travel well beyond a hint that the 'other book' may not be what we expect, and open up the whole matter of knowledge, doubt, and double thinking to scrutiny.

Of course, well beyond the *Testament*, the whole history of Trojan narratives is steeped in unreliability and conflicting accounts. When Chaucer cheerfully gathers Homer, Dares, and Dictys – 'Who-so that kan may rede hem as they write' (I, 147) – he is mustering the ultimate authorities on the Trojan War.[7] However, as is often the case when he refers us directly to sources, they do not say exactly what we expect. Chaucer's own source, Benoit de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie,* calls into question Homer's version of events, and Dares and Dictys differ in their accounts. Throw into this mixture Chaucer's invented source, Lollius, and it is clear that both authors are keenly aware of the difficulties of recording what we see, or even of seeing what we

see.[8] Henryson's questioning of Chaucer's veracity would, therefore, have been music to the earlier poet's ears: the difficulty of truth is the point. Nor does this simply refer to historical narratives, for it is a principle that extends to the core of *Troilus and Criseyde* and the reaction of the lovers to one another, and which lies at the heart of Chaucer's *Anelida and Arcite*, the other work of Chaucer's that infuses the *Testament*, its shadow stretching across the climax of Henryson's poem.

The *Anelida* too begins with an intriguing, probably obfuscatory, reference to its own source material. Having called upon Polyhymnia, the narrative declares its intention to, 'folowe… Stace, and after him Corynne' (21). There is no known parallel to the story in any Statius that has come down to us, and the name of Corinna has prompted a great deal of speculation without ever delivering a definitive text and poetess.[9] It would appear that in the *Anelida* we are playing the same game that we find in *Troilus and Criseyde*, the game that Henryson recognises and develops in the *Testament*. Memory is invoked twice within five lines, in both cases in the context of fear of loss: of thoughts and stories fading, or of them being eaten away. The opening stanza's call to Mars is an appeal for defence against time: the great beast that attacks vulnerable memory. The muse invoked is Polyhymnia, she who is, by definition, the muse of many songs and voices, and the daughter of Mnemosyne (Memory) herself.

Towards the end of the *Paradiso*, Dante also invokes Polyhymnia. However, he does so in the context of struggling memory and poetic inadequacy. Having previously been unable to endure gazing upon Beatrice's smile, he is now offered the opportunity again. His description of the moment presents a clearly divided mind: one in which the conscious thought struggles with both imagination and memory:

> Io era come quei che si risente
> di visïone oblita e che s'ingegna
> inadarno di ridurlasi a la mente

[I was like one who comes to himself from a forgotten vision and struggles in vain to draw it back to his mind][10]

The smile itself, when it comes, defies all efforts of that same mind to describe it:

> Se mo sonasser tutte quelle lingue
> che Polimnïa con le suore fero
> del latte lor dolcissimo più pingue
> per aiutarmi, al millesmo del vero
> non si verria cantando il santo riso

[If now were to sound all those tongues which Polyhymnia and her sisters with their sweetest milk made richest to help me, we could not come within a thousandth of the truth, singing her holy smile][11]

The impossibility of approaching the truth, or even one thousandth of the truth, is here made plain, as the mind confronts its own divided inadequacies and, for the first time in Dante's poem, acknowledges its inability to recount what it has seen. Polyhymnia, in lines that would have been well known to Chaucer, is associated with this failure. To call upon her at the opening of *Anelida and Arcite* is, therefore, to build upon a notion of myriad voices, none of which is able to capture the truth of experience. It is not that Polyhymnia lies, merely that assembling and maintaining constant, unequivocal truth is beyond the capacity even of the muses. For Wolfgang Clemen, the poem is straightforward in one respect at least, for he sees it as, 'full of promises that are not kept and statements that are not true'.[12] T.S. Miller goes further and claims that critics have 'remained hesitant to call Chaucer what he is in the poem: a liar'.[13] There is a strong interest in truth and lies here, certainly; but that interest engages too with half-truths, with the subtleties of deception, with self-deception, with the ultimate impossibility of knowledge of another's self, or even of one's own self. Henryson's, 'Quha wait gif all that Chauceir wrait was trew?', with its embedded self-doubt, is an acknowledgement by the Scots poet of the subtleties and uncertainties to be found, not just in the *Troilus*, but also in *Anelida and Arcite*.

The narrative voice of Chaucer's *Anelida* deals in dichotomies. Anelida, surpassing Penelope and Lucrece in virtue, is described from the outset as unequalled in 'trouthe' (76). As for Arcite, he is rarely mentioned without the epithet *fals*, the term being applied to him, in some form, fourteen times before Anelida's *complaint.* The way in which Chaucer chooses to describe the knight's falseness, however, defines his self-serving attachment as complicated and difficult, for Arcite is 'double in love and no thing pleyn' (87). Most of the critical attention given to the poem focuses on its intricate verse form, but it is also a sensitive and impressive analysis of unhappy love, at the centre of which is the far from emotionally 'pleyn' Arcite. The narrator constructs what is for him an easy division between false and true, but this is too stark a contrast even for Arcite. Henryson's Cresseid attempts to apply the same epithets at the end of the *Testament*, a triple refrain of, 'O fals Cresseid and trew knicht Troylus!' (546) jingling through the stanzas prior to the writing of her will. But it is too simple a dichotomy to encapsulate the truth of what it means to be Cresseid or Troilus, and too simple even for the wholly unlikable Arcite.

When he announces his intention to leave Anelida and replace her with another woman, Arcite's declared reason is that Anelida herself has been false. He condemns her 'doubleness' (159) in what is interestingly the first recorded instance of the word being used in the context of character.[14] There is no justification for his claim: he simply wants to 'feyne' something in order to conceal his own treachery. What is not clear is whether this is a feigned reason with which he consoles himself, and justifies his own behaviour; or whether it is merely an excuse intended for public consumption. It is a clear lie, but the extent to which Arcite admits to himself that it is a lie, before 'forth his way he wente' (161), is not at all clear. Being 'no thing pleyn' he chooses to 'pleyne' (157) about the woman who has offered him her love, and so

leave her. The words for honest clarity and groundless accusation should not come together in this way, but this is a poem in which they do.[15] Arcite is poised between the truth and the fiction that is also his truth, the distance of the narrative report maintaining the delicate balance between the two.

The poem's exploration of doubling of many kinds, crucial in terms of 'both inspiration and structure', has been shown by Lee Patterson. [16] For Patterson, Anelida's complaint vividly conveys her self-division in the way in which it, 'aspires to the self-possession of understanding - to recollection as self-collection'.[17] The notion of a divided self can be said to apply equally to Arcite, and it is one of the themes that Chaucer explores elsewhere in his work, perhaps nowhere more so than in the divided mind of Criseyde. When Criseyde sees Troilus for the first time, her response is such that the narrator rushes to assure the audience that her falling in love was not precipitous, that it was not in fact a 'sodeyn loue' (II. 667) in 'sodeyn wyse' (II. 679). His need to defend her is the result of her own metaphor. Seeing Troilus from her window, a young prince fresh from victory on the battlefield, we are told that,

> Criseyda gan al his chere aspien,
> And leet it so softe in hire herte synke,
> That to hire self she seyde, "who ȝaf me drynke?" (II. 649-51)

The narrator responds to the notion of amorous intoxication with enthusiasm, as a conventional piece of lover's rhetoric that should not be allowed to impugn Criseyde, but which he nevertheless knows how to handle: Criseyde can be claimed to be in love and should not be criticised for it. He passes over, however, the preceding act of volition. The softness with which the image of Troilus sinks into Criseyde's heart aids the narrator in quietly allowing it to pass, but the active quality of that little word, 'leet', is crucial. There is no violence done to Criseyde. Indeed, nothing is done to

Criseyde. She looks upon Troilus in all his glory and chooses to allow the image of him to enter her heart. That she then chooses to present herself to herself as an intoxicated victim of love is significant, but does not adequately describe events as we have seen them unfold, nor is it borne out in the careful enumeration of Troilus' virtues that follows. It is a performance: a desire to be seen, and to see herself, as a giddy lover who can do nothing but succumb to love's power. Her blush is similarly indicative of what Windeatt calls her 'disconcertingly double perception'.[18] We are told that, 'ffor of hire owen thought she wex al reed' (II.652). She is not responding to something outside herself but to something within: it is her own thought that makes her blush, for there is a gap between the appraising Criseyde and the Criseyde she herself creates who claims to be amorously intoxicated. What is at stake here is the idea that what we think, and what we admit to ourselves that we think, are not necessarily the same thing. This is a crucial distinction for both Chaucer and Henryson.

Henryson's Cresseid is no less complex a character than Criseyde. One of the ways in which the Scots poet achieves this is by assigning to her the language of conventional love poetry. Her stricken response to the news of Troilus' charity is portrayed in terms traditionally used to describe the grief of the woman forsaken by her lover. Denton Fox suggests that this is 'intentional irony' on Henryson's part,[19] but there is no need to suspect irony. Their case is a complicated one, but in its essence Cresseid *is* about to be abandoned by Troilus. In her dead faint, wails and sighs, she could be any woman in the *complaint d'amour* tradition, but there is particular reason to associate her with Chaucer's Anelida.

Having been deserted by the faithless Arcite, Anelida,

> … wepith, waileth, swowneth pitously;
> To grounde ded she falleth as a ston;

Craumpyssheth her lymes crokedly;
She speketh as her wit were al agon (*Anelida and Arcite*, 169-72)

The similarities between the two women extend beyond the physical in that both Chaucer's poem and the *Testament* unusually consist of a combination of rime royal and nine-line stanza. In both cases, the nine-line stanza is reserved for the complaint of the female protagonist, with an identical *a a b a a b b a b* rhyme scheme being employed by both poets. It is, as generations of critics have pointed out, a very distinctive and highly complex verse form, there being nothing quite like it in either medieval French or Latin. The *Anelida* is the one occasion on which Chaucer uses it, its distinctiveness signalled by the fact that reference works simply refer to it as the 'Anelida verse-form'. Its difficulty no doubt partly accounts for its rare occurrence after Chaucer, and the *Testament* is the only occasion on which it is employed by Henryson.[20] It seems likely therefore, that in using the distinctive *Anelida* form within a poem about a woman's suffering, a poem in which he has already drawn attention to the work of Chaucer, Henryson was intending some link to be made between the two women. That is not to say that Cresseid is faultless, merely that the form of the poem at this point opens up the possibility of a greater degree of complexity in her situation than might occasionally be acknowledged.

Cresseid's abandonment is more complete than Anelida's, her leprosy having estranged her from society as a whole. Her complaint comes in her first night in the leper house, when she retreats to a dark corner 'allone' (405). What is perhaps initially striking about her complaint, however, is that it is a complaint against fortune rather than strictly a *complaint d'amour*. There is no mention of Troilus, nor of Diomede, for that matter. Whereas Anelida speaks only of the loss of Arcite and the pain he has caused her, Cresseid's focus is on the loss of material things, the transience of beauty and of life itself. A proportion of the seven stanzas is given over

to a catalogue of lost delights and comforts in the *ubi sunt* vein: 'Quhair is thy chalmer wantounlie besene…Quhair is thy garding with thir greissis gay…' (416, 425). She dwells lovingly on the possessions of her past life, even down to the detail of her 'lawn' (423), her fine linen, pinned with a golden brooch. It is a catalogue of decadence, its lingering detail pulling against its general admonitions. The later stanzas see Cresseid herself become the fading flower (461), the focus being on death and the decay of the body, and ultimately she offers herself as a mirror to all the 'ladyis fair of Troy and Grece' (452). It is a conventional move. The fifteenth century abounds with verse and images in which beautiful youth is confronted with death and decay and is asked to reflect upon mortality, that 'reflection' sometimes taking the form of a literal mirror. One of the Harley lyrics, for instance, supplies a title of sorts for a short piece urging young women to gaze upon death, that makes its notion of mirroring clear: 'Cest le myrroure pur lez Iofenes Dames a regardir aud maytyne pur lour testes bealment adressere'. Less obviously, the poem contains an acrostic - Mors Solvit Omnia – that offers, like Henryson's acrostic, an alternative perspective, a secret for the reader who knows how to look upon it.[21]

Cresseid's, 'And in 3our mynd ane mirror mak of me' (457) is similarly intriguing. It is too straightforward in this poem of doubts, cross-texts, possibilities and mirrors, to allow her to dismiss herself as a still breathing *memento mori*. Furthermore, the distinctive structure of her complaint cannot help but evoke Anelida. As such, Cresseid, whose name will, of course, become a sixteenth-century by-word for infidelity, occupies a position of complexity that should not be overlooked. Partly, this is due to that fact that Anelida herself is almost a by-word for faithful love, and partly it is due to the fact that Chaucer creates in her a troubling and complex exploration of faithful devotion. If Chaucer's Criseyde is pared down over

time until she becomes simply ‘false’, then the same process of over-simplification focusses only on the fact that Anelida is ‘true’, without contemplation of what that ‘truth’ involves. That Anelida is faithful to Arcite is not in doubt. However, her fidelity goes beyond the bounds of what is admirable and descends into morbid obsession. The love affair that is instigated by Arcite is wholly conventional:

> But nevertheless ful mykel besynesse
> Had he er he myghte his lady wynne,
> And swor he wolde dyen for distresse
> Or from his wit he seyde he wolde twynne (99-102)

His entire effort is summarised in four lines of expected rhetoric. Anelida, on the other hand, gives herself entirely and exceptionally to her knight. Insofar as her behaviour is conventional, those conventions are intensified and surpassed by her. She weeps copiously during his absence, can scarcely eat for thinking about him, speaks only to those of whom he approves. Not only does she destroy the letters of any would-be lovers, but she insists that Arcite should read them before they are burned (113-5). There is an element of display in this, for which she is rewarded by a jealous performance. It is customary to condemn Arcite’s possessive rage at this point. However, it should be noted that Arcite does not demand to see the letters, rather, he is confronted with them by Anelida, and his response is, ‘nas but sleght and flaterie;/ Withoute love he feyned jelousye’ (125-6). In the midst of a display of jealous ranting, it is easy to overlook the word ‘flaterie’. It belongs with cunning ‘sleght’, of course, in the sense that it is not honest, but flattery is nevertheless the giving of words or performance that is desired by the recipient. It is further evidence of falseness and duplicity, but it is not so much spontaneous abuse by Arcite, as the provision of the expected response, the response that Anelida desires from her knight as she places the love letters of others before him. Condemned by the critics for

controlling a loving woman who is fearfully attempting to anticipate his desires, Arcite is, in fact, a far more complicated case. His 'commands' are, for instance, not necessarily given by him. Instead, we are told that, 'Withoute bode his heste she obeyde' (119). The Riverside Chaucer would like us to interpret 'bode' as 'delay', but it might equally be 'bode' as in 'bidding', in the sense that she does what he wants without even having to be asked.[22] The chilling phrase of the *Testament* comes to mind in which Diomede had all he wanted from Cresseid, 'And mair' (72). Excess is demanded by the courtly love tradition, but sometimes excess itself is excessive. This is the point of the rhyme scheme Chaucer bestows upon Anelida. It has, as already stated, a complex stanzaic structure, with *aabaabbab* as its basic pattern. However, Anelida only stays with this for twenty-five lines before increasing the pressure and creating a stanza of sixteen lines with a rhyme scheme of *aaabaaab* and its mirror image *bbbabbba* (256-71). There is, in addition, lavish employment of internal rhymes, together with a fondness for homophones and echo rhymes. The crescendo comes at the end of the so-called *Strophe* in a stanza of fevered rhetorical questions, each line containing two internal rhymes as well as maintaining the usual end rhyme structure:

> My swete foo, why do ye so, for shame?
> And thenke ye that furthered be your name
> To love a newe, and ben untrewe? Nay!
> And putte yow in sclaunder now and blame,
> And do to me adversite and grame,
> That love yow most – God, wel thou wost – alwey?
> Yet come ayein, and yet be pleyn som day,
> And than shal this, that now is mys, be game,
> And al foryive, while that I lyve may. (272-80)

The verse form, like Anelida, is relentless. Furthermore, as she reaches a realisation that Arcite neither loves nor pities her, there is a *tour de force* stanza in which the *a*

and *b* rhymes are all *–ede* (299-307). It is a completely contained performance of grief-stricken, obsessive love, hitting the same notes again and again.

The image of the dying swan with which Anelida ends her complaint (346-8) would have been familiar from Ovid's *Heroides*.[23] It is the image with which the great Carthaginian queen, Dido, begins her own letter, beseeching Aeneas not to take ship. The two queens and the two letters are, therefore, before us. There is, however, nothing of Dido's greatness in Anelida; nor is there anything of the heroism and self-sacrifice of Aeneas in Arcite. Chaucer's pair are simply further diminished by the comparison. Dido's suicide becomes figurative in Anelida's, 'Myself I mordre with my privy thoght' (291), as her own mind and morbid imagination sicken her. The sword of Aeneas upon which Dido throws herself is replaced in Chaucer's text by a metaphorical 'poynt of remembraunce' (211 and 350) that is cited at the beginning and at the end of the complaint, enclosing Anelida's already tightly contained narrative.[24] Memory itself has become the weapon as the mind turns upon itself. The memory of what has been lost, and the mourning over those things which do not deserve our attachment or our grief, links Anelida's complaint to that of Cresseid. The well-seasoned saffron sauces and the spiced wine of the later poem are not fit stuff for a true complaint, but nor is Arcite. It would be easier to accept Anelida's lament if the object of it were not deemed so wholly unworthy, and, indeed, four of the twelve surviving manuscripts contain only the Complaint, detached from the rest of the poem.[25] Caxton's edition of 1477, however, would have circulated in full, with Arcite – shallow, duplicitous, possibly self-deceiving – present for the world to see.

Henryson's choice of Anelida's verse form for Cresseid's complaint, therefore, implies a certain amount of male guilt by association for Troilus; the verse's cadence of abandonment and loss providing an overture for his entrance, an

entrance that occurs only two stanzas later. This is not to say that Troilus is to be simply equated with Arcite, rather that the distinctive background music of Chaucer's poem is employed by Henryson to sound a note of caution. Neat dichotomies of 'false' and 'true' are to be resisted in the *Testament*. What Chaucer, in fact, reveals in Anelida is a spirit misguided and self-deceived: what she values is not worth valuing, and the emotion that it prompts can be nothing except debased. Far from being an exercise in irony, therefore, the employment of Anelida's rhyme scheme for Cresseid's complaint provides further refraction within the text. It is, at surface level, the verse form of embodied truth, and to have Cresseid assume it along with her leprosy and reach the realisation that earthly things pass away, is one truth. But, as Chaucer's text shows, what constitutes truth for lovers, in the midst of their self-deception and self-regard, is difficult and complex. The *Testament of Cresseid* is Henryson's exploration of the same theme, reaching its height as Cresseid is wrapped in Anelida's verse form and left behind by Troilus. Lovers' truth is, in the end, unstable and ungraspable. To bind Anelida and Cresseid together is to acknowledge this.

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[1] All references to the works of Henryson are to *The Makars: The Poems of Henrtson, Dunbar, and Douglas* ed. J.A.Tasioulas (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1999).
[2] For the acrostic and discussion of the 'vther quair', see William Stephenson, 'The Acrostic *Fictio* in Robert Henryson's "The Testament of Cresseid" (Lines 58-63)', *The Chaucer Review* 29, no.2 (1994):163-5.
[3] As John L. Cutler states, 'Acrostics are not abundant in Middle English', but as Cutler himself shows, there are some which have been simply overlooked, due to their very nature. See, John L. Cutler, 'A Middle English Acrostic', *Modern Language Notes*, 70, no.2 (1955), pp.87-9.
[4] Both Thynne's edition of 1532 and Anderson's 1663 edition preserve the stanza intact.
[5] For Augustine on the imaginative process involved in recognizing words, and of the mind's ability to imagine the other part of a word when presented with one section of it, see Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, XII.16, *CSEL* 28.1:402. For a translation,

see St Augustine, *On Genesis*, ed. John E. Rotelle, O.S.A., trans., Edmund Hill O.P. (New York: New City Press, 2002) 482.

[6] The point is made by John MacQueen, *Robert Henryson: A Study of the Major Narrative Poems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,1967), 55. The idea is developed in A.C. Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity: The Encoding of Subjectivity in Medieval Narratives and Lyrics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 22-3. The word 'inventioun' appears earlier than Henryson, notably several times in Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, in order to refer to poetic creativity, but these references are to rhetorical invention rather than to the creation of a literary work *ab initio*.

[7] All references to the works of Chaucer are to *The Riverside Chaucer* ed. Larry D. Benson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987).

[8] For Chaucer's relationship to the classical texts see Barry Windeatt, *Oxford Guides to Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 37-44, 72-7.

[9] For a history of scholarship on the subject, see Vincent J. DiMarco's note in *The Riverside Chaucer* ed. Larry D. Benson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 991. For further development of the debate about Corinna, see Lee Patterson, *Chaucer and the Subject of History* (London: Routledge, 1991), 63, n.59.

[10]Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso*, ed. and trans. Robert M. Durling (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), xxiii, 55-60, 460.

[11] Dante, *Paradiso*, 460.

[12] Wolfgang Clemen, *Chaucer's Early Poetry*, trans. C.A.M. Sym (London, Methuen, 1963), 199.

[13] T.S. Miller, 'Chaucer's Sources and Chaucer's Lies: *Anelida and Arcite* and the Poetics of Fabrication' *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 114, no.3 (2015), 373-400, 375.

[14] See OED, s.v. 'doubleness (n.(2)). MED, s.v. 'doublenesse' (n.).

[15] For an exploration of the idea that a man betraying a woman in *Anelida and Arcite* is an allegory for poetic language betraying literal meaning, see Dale A. Favier, '*Anelida and Arcite*: Anti-Feminist Allegory, Pro-Feminist Complaint,' Chaucer Review 26, no.1 (1991), 83-94.

[16] Patterson, *Chaucer and the Subject of History*, 63.

[17] Ibid. 66.

[18] Barry Windeatt, *Oxford Guide to Troilus and Criseyde* (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press, 1992) 282.

[19] Robert Henryson, *Testament of Cresseid*, ed. Denton Fox (London and Edinburgh: Nelson, 1968) 125.

[20] For analysis of the form, see Paull F. Baum, *Chaucer's Verse* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1961), 99-101. Similar schemes in the French love complaint tradition are explored by James I. Wimsatt, *Chaucer and the French Love Poets: The Literary Background of the Book of the Duchess* (Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press, 1968). For similarities with Machaut's, 'Amis, je t'ay tant amé et cheri', see James I. Wimsatt, *Chaucer and his French Contemporaries: Natural Music in the Fourteenth Century* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1991) 124-6.

[21] Carleton Brown, *Religious Lyrics of the XVth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), 241. Brown entitles the lyric (no.152), 'A Mirror for Young Ladies at their Toilet'. As Cutler notes, Brown has failed to spot the acrostic, and thus his text needs to be emended in two places: line 8 should begin with *vche* and line 13 should begin with *ne.* See, Cutler, 'A Middle English Acrostic', 89.

[22] See *MED*, s.v. bod (n.(2)). The MED also offers a more anticipatory definition of 'heste' as 'inclination' or 'intention', rather than the more declarative 'command'. See MED, s.v. hest(e (n.(1))).
[23] In addition to Anelida, Chaucer uses the image for his own Dido. See the *Legend of Good Women*, 1355-6. For Chaucer and Ovid's *Heroides*, see Edgar F. Shannon *Chaucer and the Roman Poets* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929) 38-43.
[24] Anelida's metaphor is taken from Dante's *Purgatorio*, XII, 20. For discussion, see Howard H. Schless, *Chaucer and Dante: A Revaluation* (Norman, Oklahoma: Pilgrim Books, 1984), 87-8.
[25] See Benson, *The Riverside Chaucer*, 1144.